
Mr. MASTERS's
SERMON

PREACHED before the
LORD MAYOR

JANUARY 26. 1618

PILKINGTON MAYOR.

*Martis xviii^o. die Martii 16¹/₂. Annoque Regni
Regis & Regine Willielmi & Mariæ,
Anglicæ &c. Secundo.*

THIS Court doth desire Mr.
M^r. ~~to~~ Print his Sermon
Preached at Guild-hall Chap-
pel, the 26th of January last, before
the Lord Mayor and Aldermen of this
City.

Wagstaffe.

THE
Christian Temper
OF
MODERATION.

Described and Recommended, in a

S E R M O N

Before the Right Honourable the

Lord Mayor, &c.

IN

GUILD-HALL-Chappel,

ON

The first Sunday in *Hillary* Term, Jan. 26. 16⁹².

By *Samuel Masters*, B. D. Preacher to the Hospital
and Precinct of *Bridewell*.

L O N D O N :

Printed for *Awnsham Churchill*, at the *Black-Swan* in
Ave-Mary-Lane. MDCXC.

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IN
GUILDHALL Chapel,
ON
The first Sunday in Hilary Term, Jan. 16. 1822.

By Samuel Masters, B. D. Preacher to the Hospital
and Precinct of St. Dunstons.

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Printed for Andrew Arch, at the Black Swan in
Avenue-Lane. MDCXC.

To the Right Honourable
SIR THOMAS PILKINGTON,
LORD MAYOR of London.

MY LORD,

I *was with no great confidence that I appeared before such an Awful Assembly of the Reverend Judges and the Chief Magistrates of this City; nor is it without some uneasy reluctance, that I now expose this Discourse to so publick a View; but having received Your Lordship's Order, I find it necessary to comply, lest I should seem to dispute your Judgment, or contest your Authority. It was the Subject, I know, that recommended the Discourse; and the favourable acceptance it met with, is an argument of the Excellent Temper of those who approv'd it; and how happy may we not think our selves, when they who Interpret and Administer our Laws, are such Friends to Moderation? I have not design'd in this Discourse to*

plead the Cause of any Party, or to determine any of the Cases of Difference which are among us; but to recommend that Moderation which all Parties want, and which would be the shortest and surest Expedient for composing all our Differences. I must expect that they who have not this good Temper, will be angry with Me, as they are with one another; but whatever they may object, I am conscious of no other Design in this Discourse, but to promote Religion, and the Publick Good of the Church and Nation, to which I am related. May Your Lordship continue, by Your good Conduct and Example, to increase and encourage this Moderation among us; and if this Discourse can contribute anything thereto, it will much rejoice,

MY LORD,

Your Lordship's most Faithful
and most Humble Servant,

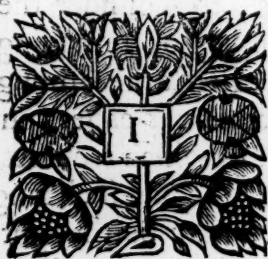
Samuel Masters.

I

THE
CHRISTIAN TEMPER
OF
Moderation, &c.

PHILIP IV. 5.

*Let your Moderation be known unto all Men ; The
Lord is at hand.*



IN this , and the Neighbouring Verses, the Apostle lays down some brief Rules, which seem to be prescribed for a Remedy against those Troubles that then infested the Church at Philippi. In the Verse preceding the Text, he exhorts them to *rejoyce in the Lord always*, from whom their Faith might derive such copious Arguments of joy, as would be sufficient

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to support them under the sharpest Persecutions. And that they might be able to rejoyce in *themselves* too, by conversing *peaceably* and *comfortably* one with another, he directs, in the Text, to the mutual practice of *Moderation*. And as to the Troubles ordinarily incident from the World about them, he adviseth in the next Verse, *Be careful for nothing; but in all things by prayer and supplication, with thanksgivings, let your requests be made known to God.* And upon the observance of these three Rules, he assures them in the next words, *That the peace of God which passeth all understanding, should keep their hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.*

My design at present is, to consider the Apostle's advice for preventing or removing those troubles which too often arise among Men, by their unnecessary and over-eager contentions among themselves; of which troubles, we of this Church and Nation have had such long and sad experience, that we may be thought, by this time, to desire, as much as we need, the Remedy. The Rule which the Apostle hath prescribed in this case, is, *Let your moderation be known unto all men;* and because the observance of this Rule is both necessary and difficult, he
hath

hath inforc'd it with a weighty Argument, *The Lord is at Hand.* My business therefore will be to explain the *Rule* prescrib'd; To urge the *Argument* annex'd; And to make a seasonable *Application* of the whole.

1. I begin to explain the *Rule* prescrib'd in these Words, *Let your Moderation be known unto all Men.* To ἡμετέρας ὑμῶν γυναικίαν πᾶσιν ἀνθρώποις. Let that moderate or temperate frame of Spirit, which belongs to you as Christians, be seen in your Behaviour toward all with whom you Converse: Or let it appear in your Conversation so conspicuous and exemplary, that all Men may see and acknowledg it, and be thereby induc'd to love you and the Religion you profess; That we may clearly understand the whole importance of this precept, it will be convenient to consider distinctly these three things:

1. The *Nature* of this *Moderation*, or wherein it consists.

2. It's *Subject-matter*, or the Cases wherein it should be known or manifested.

3. Its *Object*, or the Persons toward whom it should be us'd and practic'd.

1. Let us enquire into the *Nature* of this

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Moderation,

Moderation,—that we may find out wherein it properly consists. The *English* word *Moderation* occurs no where in our Bibles, but only in this Text: the *Greek* word, τὸ ἑπιεικές, or, ἐπιεικεια, are oftener used, and are rendred by other Words, by our Translators in other Texts, as they are by other Translators in this Text, such as *Gentleness*, *Meekness*, *Clemency*, *Patience*, *Equity*, *Condescension*, &c. From which variety of Translations, we may reasonably presume, that this *Moderation* is not one single Grace, but rather some *Frame* or *Temper* that ariseth out of a Complexion of many particular Graces; and that the general Design of its nature, is to fit Men for conversing together in Society, to which end those social Vertues properly serve, of which this excellent Temper is compounded.

Our *English* word *Moderation*, may properly denote such Government of our Spirits, or Behaviour toward others, as can contain us within due Bounds, or restrain us from flying out into such Extremes, as would break asunder that Bond of Peace, which should hold together the Members of the same Society. The *Greek* word, τὸ ἑπιεικές, is derived from

a Verb that signifies to *give way*, or *give place*; to *comply* or *condescend*: And the Primitive use of the Word in the Schools, or at the Bar, whence it seems to be taken, imports that *Equity*, which is sometimes described by Learned Men, to be the *Condescension* or *Benignity* of the *Law*, whereby it yields and complies in some emergent Cases, with which the rigor of its Letter would unequally comport.

According to these Observations, we may be able to fix the proper Notion of this comprehensive Grace, or Duty of Moderation. It is such an excellent frame or temper of spirit, whereby we are able to make all favourable Concessions and Condescensions one to another, as far as God hath left us at liberty to do so, for the Peace and Welfare of the Society to which we are related. That this description may be better understood, I will take it in pieces, and briefly Paraphrase on the several parts of it.

1. This Moderation considered, as a Grace or inward Habit, is that frame or temper of Spirit, which results from all those perticular Virtues which moderate and contain our Passions, in our Conferences and Dealings one with another: It is such a Government of our Spirits, as can

conduct our desultory Passions with *Prudence*, check their transports with *Modesty*, submit their Pride with *Humility*; as can soften them with *Meekness*, sweeten them with *Kindness*, strengthen them with *Patience*, and restrain them with *Forbearance*; so that our Passions shall at no time render us *averse* to any of our relative Duties, or prone to quarrel and contend with others, or difficult to be appeas'd and reconcil'd, whatever Discouragements or Provocations we may meet with. Such a Temper should be in all Christians, who are so earnestly exhorted to put on bowels of mercy, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, long-suffering, forbearing, and forgiving one another, if any man hath a quarrel against any. I could not forbear adding the Epithet of excellent to such a frame and temper of Spirit, which is so eminent a Perfection of our Nature, whereby we are removed farthest from the ferocity of Bruits, into the nearest resemblance of God himself.

Col. 3. 12, 13.

2. This Moderation consider'd as a Duty, consists in a practice suitable to such an excellent Temper, in conceding and condescending one to another, when necessary to preserve, or restore Peace and Amity among those who are related

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ted together in the same Society. So great is the general *Ignorance* and *Weakness* of mankind, that it is not possible for us to converse together in Society, without *justling* and *disturbing* one another, except we can sometimes *give way*, and *condescend* one to another. And herein consists our Duty of *Moderation*, so to govern our behaviour, as for Peace-sake to *yield* and *submit* sometimes, altho we think our selves to be in the *right*; and to *comply* sometimes with our Brethren, who are not able to discern that they are in the *wrong*; not by running into the same mistake, but by bearing with them, and condescending to them, till they can be recovered out of it. So much we are taught in those Divine Precepts, which require us to *submit our selves one to another in the fear of God*: To be *subject one to another, and cloath'd with Humility*: And no less did St. Paul practice, who himself tells us, *Tho I be free from all men, yet have I made my self servant unto all*: And as he afterwards adds, *he became all things to all men*, in such a compliant Condescension.

5 Eph. 21.
1 Pet. 5. 5.

1 Cor. 9. 19.

3. To prevent any mistake, I add, That this *Moderation* will dispose us to condescend and comply with others only in such cases, and so far

far as God hath left us at liberty to do so. For if any cases of difference arise about the necessary Articles of our Faith, which God hath plainly revealed; or about the substantial Parts of our Religious *Worship*, or the Moral Duties of a *Holy Life*, which God hath indispensably required; such cases are not to be compromis'd by the Condescensions or Compliances of *Moderation*; we have here no Right to yield, no Place to give; we are commanded to contend earnestly for these things, and to prefer them to Peace, or Life it self; in these cases Zeal is lawful and commendable; and a Compliance with men, would be the basest Treachery to our Lord in Heaven; and therefore Moses laid aside his meekness, when he contended with the people of Israel against their Idolatry; and so did our Apostle this moderation, when he sharply rebuked St. Peter to his face, for subverting the Faith of the Gentiles, by his Judaizing Compliances.

But there are many other cases of difference, that may happen among us, which the Wisdom of God hath not thought fit to determine by any necessary injunction, wherein he hath left us at liberty to yield and comply one with another; and where we may, we ought to do it; this seeming

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to be the chief reason for which our great Lord hath left such cases *undetermined*, that we might never want a sufficient occasion for *exercising* and *approving* this excellent grace of Moderation.

4. The *End* for which this Moderation serves, and should be practised by us, is the *Peace and Welfare of the Society to which we are related*. To this end, Moderation is necessary to ward off or heal up those wounds in the Body, which would be made and widened by the angry Quarrels of its Members; and to cherish that Peace on which the publick Safety and Prosperity do chiefly depend. And from this end we may infer both the Reason and the Measure of our duty. We ought to deny our selves in complying with others, when necessary for the Publick Good, because the interest of the whole should be always preferred to the private interest of any part; and as we need not thus yield and condescend to others when there is no such end to be served by it; so we ought to do it in such cases, and so far as is necessary to maintain the Peace and Welfare of the Society to which we belong.

This excellent Temper of Spirit, will indeed serve to many other good purposes, but the name of Moderation belongs to it chiefly, as
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it respects the *Publick Good*; and tho we may sometimes commendably comply with others, either out of *Prudence*, respecting our own private Interests; or out of *Charity*, respecting the private Interests of others; yet we do it properly from this Principle of *Moderation*, when we respect the *Publick good*; and I may add, as a just consequence from thence, that whatever *Compliances* we make with others, which are inconsistent with the *Common-weal*, they are not to be called *Moderation*, but *Faction* and *Conspiracy*.

2. Having discovered wherein the general nature of this *Moderation* consists, let us descend to those particular cases wherein it should be known or manifested in our constant exercise and exemplary practice of it. These are all such cases of *difference*, as may happen in our Civil or Sacred Societies, which God hath thought fit to leave undetermined, which tho numerous and various, may be reduc'd to these Four Heads, of *Opinion*, *Practice*, *Interest*, and *Censure*.

1. We should use this *Moderation* in asserting our own *Opinions*, or in opposing the *Opinions* of others. They who are of this excellent Temper, will be too modest to admire themselves, or
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impose on others; they will not *disturb* the World with an unnecessary *Paradox*, nor urge their *Opinions* with an *Importunity* that exceeds their *Importance*; nor require an *Entertainment* for them, beyond the *Evidence* with which they can *recommend* them, whereby much of the noise and fury of our *Contentions* would be prevented. And if this *Christian Temper* did moderate in our *Disputations*, we should *defend* our *Opinions* with *soft words*, and *calm passions*; we should not delight in *contradicting* others, or be impatient of being *contradicted* our selves; we should seek *Truth* more than *Victory*, and study rather to *compose* than *maintain* the *Controversie*. Such, saith St. Paul, should the Servant of the Lord be ἀμειψόμενος, not a *contentious*, but a *moderate* man, one who will with *meekness instruct* his *Opponent*.

1 Tim. 3. 3.
2 Tim. 2. 25.

We should also manifest our *Moderation*, in bearing a due *respect* to the *Persons* and *Judgments* of those who dissent from us, interpreting their *Opinions* *candidly*, and *weighing* their *Arguments* *impartially*, as more ready to agree than differ with them; and if at last, the *Truth* should appear to be on our side, this *Moderation* should *impose silence* on us, if the

fury of the *Controversie* be like to do more *mischiefs*, than the *defence* of the *controverted Point* will be able to *compensate*. With such *Moderation* we should be able to frame our *Opinions* with more *Truth*, and to maintain them with more *Peace*; or in the *Apostle's Phrase*, to *speake the truth in love*.

4. Eph. 15.

2. This *Moderation* should influence our *Actions* and *Behaviour*, to render us as agreeable and conformable, as may be, to those with whom we converse. Altho in *private* we may conduct our *Actions* according to our own *prudence* or *pleasure*; yet when we appear *abroad*, we should bend our *humour* into a *compliance* with all the *innocent Usages* and *Customs* of the world about us; not affecting any needless *singularity*, or unnecessary *Names* or *Badges* of *Distinction*; nor indulging our selves in the *perverse forwardness* of *walking contrary* to others.

They who have attain'd to this excellent *Temper*, will suffer their *Christian Liberty* to be restrained by the *just Laws* of their *Superiors*, or will restrain it themselves in a *charitable compliance* with their weaker *Brethren*. Such a *Moderation* would beget such good *Humours*, or good *Manners* among *Christians*, whereby they might

might converse together, without provoking one another, or disturbing the Society in which they live. So our Blessed Saviour lived in the World, complying with all the innocent Customs of the Jewish Nation, and with all the lawfull Rituals of the Jewish Church. So lived St. Paul, ^{1 Cor. 10. 33,} and so he hath taught us, Give none offence neither to the Jew nor to the Gentile, nor to the Church of God; even as I please all men in all things, not seeking mine own profit, but the profit of many, that they may be saved.

3. We should practice this Moderation in pursuing or vindicating our Interests; whence the most and sharpest Contentions do usually arise. We should not only restrain our self-love from running out into the vicious excesses of Covetousness and Ambition; but also remit it to such a degree, as to be able to abate in our just pretences, to brook disappointments, and to make our own Interests sometimes to bend and give way, that the Interests of others may have also room to advance. He that can govern his Spirit with Moderation, he will not seek his own things only, ^{2 Phil. 4,} but also the things of others; he will even in his Religious Concernments, not please himself, but please his neighbour for his good to Edification; and ^{15 Rom. 1. 2,}

13 Gen. 8, 9.

much more will he do so in his *secular* Interests, which are of less value. He will not exact *Titles* and *Punctilio's*, or strain his Right to a *summum jus*, but will rather *condescend* not only to accept, but to offer any tolerable terms of Accommodation, to preserve Peace, as *Abraham* did to *Lot*, when their Herdsmen quarrel'd about their Pastures.

When also we are provok'd by *Wrongs* and unjust *Reproaches*, this *Moderation* should restrain and *qualifie* our Spirits, that we may be able to interpret the injury *candidly*, to resent it *meekly*, to bear it *patiently*, to forgive it *easily*, and to require it only with *Prayers* and *Blessings*, till we overcome evil with good; as our Holy Religion hath taught us for preserving that Peace it so earnestly recommends.

4. This *Moderation* should appear also in the *Censures* we pass on our selves or others; suppressing that *Self-conceit* which usually begins the Quarrel, and that *Contempt* of others which usually attends it. We are too apt to flatter our selves, or our Party, with the best Names, and the fairest Encomiums, and to *misrepresent* others, especially when *Emulation* and *Strife* have tinctur'd our eye with too much *Choler*, and

and put *them* at too great a distance from us ; and therefore do greatly need this *Moderation* to govern our Spirits, that we may neither *Abuse* our selves, nor our Brethren with an *unrighteous Judgment*.

We should *Ballance* our overfond thoughts of our selves, with an impartial discovery of our shameful *Defects*, and numerous *Faults*, which will soon be enough to weigh down the *Merits* which are so apt to exalt us : And we should allow to others the priviledg of every Plea that may be made in their excuse, from Ignorance or Weakness, from the Prepossessions of Education, from personal Prejudices, or invincible Temptations, or from the want of necessary means for their Conviction; and should be ready to cover their Faults with the fairest glosses their Actions will bear, and to commend what they do well, with all the advantages that a sincere Charity can suggest. When we are come to such a Temper, then may the Apostle's rule obtain among us, *Let nothing be done through strife* Philip. 2. 3. *or vain-glory, but in lowliness of mind, let each esteem others better than himself.*

3. We are to consider, in the last place, the *Object*, or Persons towards whom this *Moderation*

ration should be exercised; it should be known, saith the Text, *to all Men, i. e.* this Moderation respects all Men universally in the Habit, and every Man particularly with whom we converse in the actual exercise, and especially, those to whom we are related in the publick Society, either of Church or State.

They shamefully elude this Precept, who expect such Moderation from others, but will not practice it themselves; or who will use it only toward their own Party, who consent with them, and consequently need no Condescension from them; whereas it chiefly respects such as are at difference with us for containing us together within the Bond of Peace.

All Men are concern'd in this Duty of Moderation, either as their Duty which they ought to practice, or as their Privilege, with which they are to be treated by others. Every Man, who is the Member of a Society, ought to be indued with this excellent Temper of Moderation, without which no Man can discharge those Offices he owes to the Society, or receive those Benefits he expects from it; for this is to a political Body, what joints and sinews are to the natural Body, whereby the Members bend and comply to a mutual

mutual defence and support of the whole; and he who wants it, is like a Limb of Wood or Stone, *useless and burthensome*. No Person can be *above* the practice of this *Duty*, nor any one fall *beneath* this *Priviledg*; without this no *Counsels* can be well advised, or any Affairs rightly administred, or any Order or Peace preserv'd.

With this *Moderation*, *Superiors* should treat their *Inferiors*, framing their *Laws* with *Clemency*, and *Administring* them with *Equity*, whereby they become in *St. Peter's* Phrase, *Ἀγαθοὶ καὶ ἠμεῖς*, which we render, *Good and Gentle*. 1 Pet. 2. 18.
With the same *Moderation*, should *Inferiors* submit to those that are *over them*, not only to the *Good and Gentle*, but also to the *froward*, interpreting their *Actions* candidly, obeying their *Commands* chearfully, and submitting meekly to their *Impositions*, even to the *Prejudice* of their private *Interests*, when requisite to the *Publick Good*. With such *Moderation* also *Equals* should meet together on their level, without interfering, or quarrelling one with another, *Speaking evil of no man, being not brawlers* Titus 3. 2.
or contentious, but ἠμεῖς, gentle, shewing meekness unto all men. In a word, this *Moderation* is so necessary to all *Persons*, and in all *Conditions*
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and Offices of Life, that some have thought fit to render the Original Word in the Text, by the general Name of *Humanity*. This may suffice for explaining the Precept, injoyn'd in the former part of the Verse.

2. I proceed to consider the *Argument* annex'd for inforcing the practice of the foregoing Rule, in those Words, *ὁ κύριός ἐστις ἡμεῖς*, *The Lord is at hand*. The words are few, but weighty, either of them is a Topick pregnant with very cogent Motives, whether we consider the *Lord*, who is at hand, or the *nearness* of that Lord to us.

1. If we consider that *Lord* who is at hand, several Arguments will arise from thence to oblige us to the practice of this *Moderation*.

1. He is the *Lord*, who hath an absolute Authority over us, who expressly commands this Duty. We acknowledg him to be such a *Lord*, and we cannot but have observ'd how frequently and earnestly his Laws recommend to us *Meekness* and *Humility*, *Long-suffering* and mutual *Forbearance*, *Unity* and *Peace*, which make up this comprehensive Grace or Duty of *Moderation*. These are the chief Parts or Properties of that holy Religion he hath instituted;
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for so St. James describes that *Wisdom which is from above*, it is *pure, peaceable, (gentle), gentle, and easy to be intreated.* James 3. 17.

Who then upon Earth hath Power to forbid that *Moderation*, which the Lord from Heaven hath prescribed? How meanly or unkindly soever we may think of one another, yet shall we dare to despise the Lord or think lightly of one of his Precepts? Altho this Duty may be very irksome to our carnal Hearts, yet this must supersede all our Cavilations and Reluctancies, that he, who is the Lord, commands it.

2. He is the Lord of our *Fellow-Servants*, who hath indulged them the Priviledg. to be treated with such *Moderation*, and therefore we may not deny it to them. If we account our selves the *Children or Servants* of that great *Family*, of which he is the Lord, we cannot but allow him the *Right* to make what Orders he thinks fit among us, and that it is our *Duty* to practice that *Behaviour* one towards another, which he hath appointed; to yield to every one those *Concessions and Privileges* which he hath granted them, to pay that *respect*, and shew that *favour* to our Brethren, which he hath allowed them, if not for *their* sake, yet for the *Lords* sake, who made the Allowance.

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Matt. 9. 6, &c.

We read what care our Lord hath taken of those, who through meanness, weakness, or rudeness of knowledg, seem to be least in his heavenly Kingdom. He tells us, That it is his Fathers pleasure, that not one of them should perish; that he himself came to save them; that their Angels always behold the face of his Father; that therefore no man should despise or offend them; and if any did, it were better for him that a milstone were hang'd about his neck, and he were drown'd in the depth of the Sea: And with a like Argument St. Paul presseth this Duty of Moderation, Let not him that eateth, despise him that eateth not; and let not him that eateth not, judge him that eateth; for God hath received him: Who art thou that judgest another mans servant? to his own Master he standeth or falleth; yea, he shall be holpen up, for God is able to make him stand.

Rom. 14. 3, 4.

3. He, who is the Lord of us all, doth himself treat all of us with such Moderation, whose Example should direct and engage us into a like practice one toward another. Altho he be the high and holy One, yet he condescends to accommodate himself, his Laws, and his Providence, to our Capacity and Condition. He humbles his Glorious Majesty in such rude Representations, as

we are capable of apprehending; he was content to renew his Law to us by *Revelation*, after we had defac'd the *Original*, which was at first impress'd on our Nature; and he continues to teach us with *line upon line, and precept upon precept*, as our dull Capacities can receive it. He is not *strict to mark what we do amiss*; he is *slow to anger, and rich in mercy*; he doth not *afflict willingly*; he *pitieth* while he *corrects*; he *meets* his *penitent prodigals* more than *half way*; *forgives* them *easily*, and most *affectionately* embraceth them.

How eminent an Example of this *Moderation* was our Blessed Saviour, while he lived in the World, amidst the Contradictions, Blasphemies, and Persecutions of the worst of Men, whom yet he persisted to *pity* and *instruct*, and for whom he *pray'd* and *died*!

How ill would it go with us, if our Lord should not use such *Moderation* toward us! But then, how unaccountably strange must it seem, that the great Lord of Heaven should *condescend* and *concede* so much to us, and we think it *too much* to do so to one another! that he should be *Lowly* and *Meek*, *Long-suffering*, and *easy* to be *intreated* towards us; and we be *Proud*, *Churlish*, *Inexorable* and *Revengeful*, one against another!

And therefore the Scriptures do so often recommend such Duties to us from the obliging Pattern of Almighty God, and our Blessed Saviour.

2. If we lay the *Emphasis* on the other word, and consider how *nigh* our Lord is to us; that will supply us with three Arguments more, according to the threefold Interpretation of the Phrase, *The Lord is at Hand*.

1. The Lord is at hand in his *Omnipresence* and *Omniscience*, beholding and observing our temper and behaviour one toward another. So near is our Lord to us, that he knows our *Thoughts*, even before our minds are conscious of them; there is not a *Word* in our Tongue, but before we utter it, he knows it altogether; and there are none of our *Ways* or *Actions* in any distance of place, or under any coverts of Privacy or Darkness, which are hid from his All-seeing Eye, as the Psalmist elegantly describes his Omnipresence.

Psal. 139.

Our Lord is thus at hand, as the great Master of the Family in which we live, observing curiously how his Orders are kept, taking strict notice how all his Servants behave themselves both towards him, and one toward another. Thus he walked amidst the seven Golden Chandelicks, observing whatever was *Laudable* or *Culpable*.

in the Churches of *Asia*. He was so nigh to Saul when breathing out Rage and Fury against his Disciples, that he himself felt the Wounds ^{9 Acts. 4.} of his Persecution. And St. Peter tells us, that a meek and quiet Spirit in the private Society of a Family, and much more in the publick Society of his ^{1 Pet. 3. 4.} Church, is taken notice of by God, & is in his sight of great Price. How careful then should we be of practising this Moderation in our Actions, yea in our words, yea in our very thoughts, one toward another, seeing our Lord, who so strictly commands it, is so near at hand to observe our carriage!

2. The Lord is at hand in the course of his Providence, disposing of us, and of all Events and Circumstances about us, which should highly engage us to the practice of this Moderation. That Lord who surrounds us with his continual Providence, makes us the opportunities we meet with for exercising this Moderation to others, which if we should refuse, how soon can he, with the turn of his hand, put us into a condition to need a like Moderation to be us'd towards us? And how justly may we expect it, if we should so highly provoke him? If we are willing to comply with his Precept, he is at hand to assist us with his Grace, in the performance of

so difficult a duty, and to reward us for it with the Blessings of his Providence; but if we refuse to practice this *Moderation* toward our fellow-servants, we have no reason to expect any better treatment from them, or from our Lord himself.

They who consider the inconstant *Revolutions* to which humane Affairs are subject, will think it prudent to grant such conditions to others, which they may sometime ask for themselves; and they who believe God's Providence, and what he hath so often declared, that he *resisteth the proud*, and *avengeth the cause of the oppressed*, will think it necessary to approve themselves to him in the practice of that *Moderation* he so expressly requires.

3. The Lord is at hand to call us to an account of our behaviour both toward him, and one toward another; and it therefore highly concerns us to be found of him in good temper, and in good order; which Argument is thus expressed by St. James, *Grudge not one against another, brethren, lest ye be condemned; behold the Judge standeth at the door.* Tho the Solemn Day of the General Judgment may be at a great distance, yet we have reason to expect a much shorter time for the

the private *Audit* of particular Persons, and of particular Churches and States, which have their own *Fates* and *Periods* within the greater Revolution of the World. And our Lord is never nearer to enter into Judgment with us, than when we live most disorderly and uncharitably among our selves; for he hath declared, that if any of his servants shall say in his heart, My Lord delayeth his coming, and shall begin to beat the men-servants and maidens, and to eat and drink, and be drunken; the Lord of that servant shall come in a day that he looked not for him, and at an hour that he is not aware, and will cut him asunder, and appoint him his portion with unbelievers. 12 Mat. 45, 46.

And when our Lord enters into Judgment with us, a great part of our account will consist of our *demeanour* and *carriage* toward our fellow-servants, not only how justly and honestly, but also how humbly, meekly, and charitably, we have behaved our selves in our Converses and Dealings one with another. And we are plainly foretold what Sentence we must expect; that he who will not forgive his fellow-servant a few pence, shall never be discharged by his Lord from the many Talents he is himself indebted; 18 Mat. 23, &c. that he shall have judgment without mercy, that shew-
ed. James. 13.

2 Rom. 8, 9.

ed no mercy: That to them that are contentious, God will render indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish; i. e. That the righteous Judg will not use that Moderation towards them, which they refus'd at his command to practice towards others. If then we find our selves not much perswaded to this Duty for our Lord's sake, or for our Brethren's sake, yet let us do it for our own sake, that our great Judg may use such Moderation towards us, in not being strict to mark what we have done amiss, or severe in punishing us according to our deserts.

3. I have now explain'd the Precept, and urg'd the Argument of the Text; it remains, that we make a seasonable Application of both to our selves.

1. In our first Reflections, we cannot forbear to condemn and bewail the scarcity and defect of this Moderation among us. It is too notorious to be dissembled, how many of all Parties want this blessed Temper, who being strangers to this Moderation, have become Enemies against it, and to such a degree, as even to hate its very Name, and to blacken it with the worst of Names, and to treat those most unkindly, who would set any Lessons or Patterns of this Moderation before them.

them. And what may add wonder to our Lamentation, they pretend in all this, a Zeal for the Publick Interests of Church and State; as if our case were so odd and peculiar, that that Moderation which is the best Preservative of all other Societies, would be the greatest bane of ours; or that Divisions and Contentions would prove as great Blessings to us, as they are mischiefs to others.

Plutarch wonders what Solon meant by making a Law, That it should be a Reproach to any man to be a Neuter in a time of publick Dissentions; because as he argues, he left never a Wise man to arbitrate amidst the litigant Parties, or ever a sober Citizen for the rest to reform by. And among his other Political Precepts, he adviseth, That a Magistrate should above all things take care to cherish Peace and Concord, and to suppress all dissensions and quarrels in the Commonwealth, and he instructs them to use this Argument to those that are at variance, That they who can forgive and comply with others, do excel them in Wisdom, and Greatness of Spirit, as much as they do in Moderation and Good Nature.

But when we consider what painful Convulsi-

Ἀπὸ τοῦ ὅτι
ἐν αἰσῶνι πῶ-
λεως μὴ δὴ
εἰς πᾶσι
Plutarch inter
Πολίτην πᾶ-
σα γὰρ ἡμεῖς

Οὐκ ἐπικρατεῖ
καὶ ἡδὲ μόνον
ἀλλὰ καὶ φρονί-
μων καὶ μεγαλό-
ψυχος διαφέρει
Ibid.

ons this bitter zeal hath for a long time produc'd among us, and to what eminent dangers it lately expos'd us, that its fervour doth not yet remit, but rather increase; renders our case so sad and strange, that we cannot account for it, without recurring to a *superiour* Cause, and acknowledging that an *Evil Spirit* from the Lord is gone out among us, as a *Tempter* to seduce us, and a *Tormentor* to punish us; and we have great reason to bewail that ill Temper we are in, both as a *heinous Sin*, and as a *dreadful Judgment*.

2. Suffer me in the Conclusion to *Exhort* and *Persuade* you to this Moderation, with an earnestness that its Nature deserves, and our Necessities require. Let me beseech you by the *Authority* of Almighty God, that requires it; by the *meekness* and *gentleness* of Christ, who was so eminent a Pattern of it; by the *Honour* and *Safety* of that pure Religion we profess; by the *Settlement* and *Prosperity* of the Church and Nation to which we are related; by all the *Interests* that are dear to us in this World, and the *Rewards* of the next; that your Moderation be known unto all men.

Let Meekness and Humility, Patience and Forbearance, Brotherly-kindness and Charity, exalt our spirits into this excellent Temper, which would

would soon compromise all our Differences, and restore that peace, which would sweeten and secure all our Injoyments. Let us lay aside all reproachful Names of Distinction; let us no longer upbraid one another with any past Miscarriages; or return the Injuries we have received; in any Unchristian Revenges; let us readily forgive those who Disclaim their former Errors; and with Meekness instruct those, who cannot yet extricate themselves from them. Let us condescend and comply one with another, as far as we can with a good Conscience, to recover that Unity and Amity we have lost; and let us mark those, who would cause Divisions among us, to avoid them. Let us contend no longer, except in a kind Emulation, who shall approve themselves the wiser Men, and better Christians, in being most forward and earnest, in seeking and making Peace.

Let us not be discourag'd or affrighted out of this Moderation, by the ill Arts of those who are not so good themselves, nor can endure to see so much good, as would be hereby wrought among us. Let us industriously incourage and promote this Moderation among all with whom we Converse; and highly honour those, in whom it most eminently appears, as the truest Friends
of.

of our *Church and Nation*, who take the best course to *advance and secure* the Publick Interests of both.

It hath pleas'd God, by a most *merciful Revolution* of his Providence, to place us under a *Government* that excels in *Moderation*; that abhors the policy of *weakening* us by *Divisions*, that it may advance it self into an exorbitant Power; that earnestly invites us to *peace*, and designs for us a *happy and lasting Settlement*. Let not us with a *perverse Frowardness* oppose the kindest offers of God, and our Prince, but wisely embrace the opportunity is made us, and thankfully accept the *Blessings* are cast into our Bosoms. Then may we live as *Christians*; and love as *Brethren*; then may *Peace* be within our Walls, and *Prosperity* within our Borders; then *Mercy and Truth* may meet together, and *Righteousness and Peace* may kiss each other.

And when we are sufficiently improv'd in this *Divine Temper of Moderation*, we may be capable of *Admission* into the blessed Society of *Saints and Angels* above, where are no *Sects or Parties*, no *Quarrels or Contentions*; but where we shall enjoy the most delightful *Entertainments* of *Love and Peace* to all *Eternity*.

F I N I S.

